



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
675 U.S. Courthouse  
801 Broadway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

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February 10, 2004

TENNESSEE BULLETIN NO. 300-04-2

SUBJECT: LTP - WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP) FY 2004  
GUIDANCE

Purpose: To provide information and changes to FY 2004 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) in Tennessee.

Expiration Date: December 31, 2004.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) operating procedures have been completely revised in Tennessee for FY 2004, as follows:

1. The WHIP Average Cost List has been streamlined and condensed to contain average costs by practices with the exception of WHIP-12, Streambank and Shoreline Protection, which will continue to be cost shared by component. WHIP-12 also has a maximum cost share per landowner per contract of \$3,000. The new average cost list dated January 21, 2004, will be posted on the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (e-FOTG) in early February. The method of payment for WHIP will continue to be Average Cost (AC) for FY 2004 contracts, and the cost-share rate will be 75 percent. Prior year contracts with method of payment Average Not to Exceed (AA) and component payments can be modified to reflect the new AC method of payment and new cost list, as per instructions previously provided by Gary Handley.
2. WHIP practice standards, specifications, and guidelines have been revised in their entirety and will be distributed electronically as a National Conservation Programs Manual (NCPM), Part 517, Tennessee supplement. This revision dated January 2004 will completely replace the "green sheets" developed in 1998. Field offices will be notified by electronic transmittal notice and instructions for filing the new practice standards in early February.

DIST: O

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3. The Ranking Criteria with instructions has been completely revised and will be distributed electronically as an NCPM, Part 517, Tennessee supplement. This revision dated January 4, 2004 will replace all previously used ranking criteria. All existing applicants who have indicated an interest in continuing in WHIP should be re-evaluated and ranked according to the new Ranking Criteria dated January 4, 2004. Field offices will be notified by electronic transmittal notice and instructions for filing the new ranking criteria in early February. It is suggested that field staff request training and assistance from the field biologists with initial use of the ranking criteria.
4. NRCS in Tennessee will utilize PROTRACTS for tracking applications, developing contracts, and allocating and managing funds in FY 2004. Training will be provided to field staffs by field resource conservationists and field biologists. New AD Forms, including AD-1155, AD-1155A, and AD-1156, should be utilized as appropriate in writing conservation plans and preparing contract modifications. New forms, including CCC-1200 and NRCS-1245 will be used for taking applications, approving contracts, and making payments. AD-1154, WHIP Special Provisions, and AD-1154, Attachment A, General Provisions, will be replaced with a special WHIP Appendix developed for use with the CCC-1200 for WHIP and will be available in PROTRACTS for WHIP 2004.

Contact Donald Dotson, Carol Chandler, or the appropriate resource conservationist or field biologist for additional assistance. Field biologists were instrumental in the development of the new guidelines in an effort to streamline WHIP, make it more user friendly, and increase participation.

/s/

JAMES W. FORD  
State Conservationist